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Lakshya Sen

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PARIS 2024

LAKSHYA AND KUSALE VICTORIES HEADLINE INDIA'S DAY AT THE GAMES

Shuttler Lakshya Sen overpowered Indonesia's world number 3 Jonatan Christie while Swapnil Kusale entered 50 m rifle 3 positions final

CHANCE FOR ANOTHER MEDAL IN SHOOTING

India's third medal at Paris Olympics could also come in shooting with Swapnil Kusale qualifying for the finals of 50m rifle 3 positions. While Aishwary Pratap Tomar missed out, Kusale has a chance to add to India's tally in the final on Thursday. Meanwhile, boxer Lovlina Borgohain (75 kg) advanced to the quarterfinals and is one win away from securing a medal

LASKHYA, SINDHU ENTER ROUND OF 16

- Despite being in a must-win position, Lakshya Sen was not flustered. That he was up against World No 3 Jonatan Christie didn't matter. In a contest that lasted less than an hour, Sen cruised past the reigning All England and Asian champion 21-18, 21-12 to enter the pre-quarters
- P V Sindhu, beat Kristin Kuuba 21-5 21-10 to reach last 16 | P17

2nd

CONSECUTIVE GOLD FOR NEW ZEALAND WOMEN IN RUGBY SEVENS EVENT

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Thankachan sits on top of what is left of his brother's house and watches the rescue operations at Chooralmala on Wednesday. His brother and sister are missing | E VIJAYA

249 AND COUNTING

● 1,500 RESCUED SO FAR; 240 PEOPLE STILL MISSING ● ALMOST 90% OF HOUSES IN MUNDAKKAI DESTROYED ● ARMY'S 190-M BAILEY BRIDGE TO BE READY TODAY

KERALA GOVT IGNORED OUR ALERTS: SHAH

The Centre had sent multiple warnings about floods and landslides, starting as early as July 23, but the Kerala government ignored them, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday in Parliament

THERE WAS NO WARNING: PINARAYI

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said only an orange alert was issued and the actual rainfall was much higher than forecast. He said a red alert was issued after the landslides

MANOJ VISWANATHAN @ Chooralmala

FLATTENED houses, mangled vehicles, boulders, huge uprooted trees, and mud and slush everywhere. The twin Wayanad villages of Chooralmala and Mundakkai resembled graveyards on Wednesday.

According to reports, the toll has touched 249 (official tally 167) while 240 are missing (official figure 191). In Mundakkai, 90% of the houses have been destroyed, filled with mud up to 10ft high. Relatives of the missing persons waited in anguish as rescue workers from the Army, Navy, National Disaster Response Force, Coast Guard, Fire and Rescue Services, Police, Civil Defence Force and volunteers of various NGOs waded through knee-deep slush searching for survivors.

Meanwhile, 19 people who were stranded at a resort in Mundakkai were rescued and brought to a relief centre. Five bodies were recovered from Mundakkai. The rescue workers had to brave inclement weather and hostile terrain to search for survivors. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said over 1,500 people were rescued so far.

"My wife Sheeja and eight other family members are missing. There is no information about them," said Soman of Mandapathil house in Mundakkai.

ADGP M R Ajithkumar said rescue workers had reached every remote area of Mundakkai and saved all stranded residents. "Since the bridge has been washed away, we couldn't take heavy machinery to the area. We are using cutters, ropes and small equipment to cut concrete slabs. Dogs from the K9 squad helped identify four spots and we are removing the debris to find the missing people," he said.

Fire and Rescue Services personnel managed to take an earthmover to Mundakkai after crossing the river on Wednesday morning. "There are chances of people being stuck under the debris in various houses. We have rescued all survivors but cannot rule out the possibility of there being more," said Ajithkumar.

The Army said it will build the 190-m-long Bailey bridge by Thursday evening, which will help it carry heavy excavators to Mundakkai.

Top: A mother and daughter at a relief camp; Middle: People search for their belongings; Above: An aerial view of Chooralmala, part of which was wiped off in Tuesday's landslides | A SANESH / S SIBIGAPANDIYAN

Wayanad received 7% of its seasonal rainfall on July 30

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

WAYANAD received extreme rainfall in the few days prior to Tuesday's landslide, according to data released by India Meteorological Department. An analysis of the data shows that the district received as much as 7% of its entire seasonal rainfall in 24 hours (from Monday morning to Tuesday morning) and 21% of the total seasonal rainfall in the past two weeks.

The district, which had been facing deficient rainfall since the arrival of the Southwest monsoon, dramatically jumped to the 'normal rainfall' category due to the extreme rainfall in the 24 hours between July 29 and July 30. For example, on July 28, the district received only 9 mm rainfall, which was 73% lesser than that day's normal (32.9 mm) rainfall. The next day, on July 29, it received a whopping 141.9 mm of rainfall, which was 493% above the daily normal rainfall.

Wayanad's annual average rainfall is 2,800 mm while the Southwest monsoon's seasonal average rainfall (June-September) in the district is 2,464.7 mm. It means, the total precipitation from July 29 morning to July 30 morning was 6% of the annual precipitation and around 7% of the seasonal precipitation.

Elderly woman waits in despair for her loved ones

K SHIVA KUMAR @ Meppadi (Wayanad)

MAHADEVI, 75, who hoped to spend her twilight years happily with her grandchildren, now finds herself in a relief camp here anxiously waiting for news about her family members who went missing after the landslide a few days ago.

Whenever she hears the siren of an ambulance, Mahadevi rushes out to see if her loved ones are brought to the camp.

Mahadevi, who hails from Ukkalagere village in T Narasipura taluk of Mysuru district, moved to Meppadi in Wayanad district a few years ago along with her family members. At Meppadi, her family members worked as daily wagers and used to visit Ukkalagere village during off-season.

However, tragedy struck Mahadevi's family when the landslide swept away nine members of her family. The body of Shreya, her 19-year-old granddaughter, has been recovered. But the fate of Mahadevi's sons Gurumalla, 60, Shivanna, 45, and Siddaraju, 42, her daughters-in-law Savitha and Savithri, 40, and her grandchildren Ashwini, 13, Rakshith Krishna, 10, and Divya, 30, is not known. With so many of them losing their loved ones, uneasy calm prevails at the relief camp. Mahadevi, however, manages to keep her six grandchildren, aged between 6 and 10, engaged without giving them a hint of the tragedy.

Mahadevi's relative Mahadeva and her daughter from T Narasipura are now at the relief camp to help her take care of her grandchildren. MORE REPORTS: 4, 7, 9

MUDA 'scam': Guv issues notice to CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a fresh political development, Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot is learnt to have issued a notice to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on July 27, seeking an explanation from him on the alleged irregularities in the allotment of sites to his wife by MUDA.

Activist TJ Abraham met the governor on July 25 and sought his permission to prosecute Siddaramaiah. Accordingly, the governor issued the notice to the CM.

To discuss this matter, Siddaramaiah has decided to hold a cabinet meeting at 11 am on Thursday. The meeting will deliberate on options, including passing a resolution against the next move of the governor, according to sources.

Before the cabinet meeting, Siddaramaiah will have a "breakfast" meeting with his cabinet colleagues at 9.30 am.

In fact, the CM discussed the matter with the high command in Delhi on Tuesday. After returning on Wednesday evening, he rushed to Energy Minister KJ George's house. The governor too was in Delhi amid these developments.

According to sources, Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy had his role in these political developments. He had announced that JDS will not back BJP's padayatra plan. By announcing this, he managed to pressure Union Home Minister Amit Shah to initiate legal action against Siddaramaiah, according to a source. P7

HDK slams BJP, says won't join padayatra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a major setback to the BJP-JDS alliance, Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Wednesday slammed BJP over its proposed padayatra's timing and involvement of a prominent leader from that party, who worked against former PM HD Deve Gowda's family during the recent elections, in it.

The BJP has decided to organise the padayatra from Bengaluru to Mysuru to protest against the ruling Congress over the alleged scams in MUDA and ST development corporation.

For the first time after joining the Modi-led NDA government, Kumaraswamy has spoken against BJP and now, the padayatra looks uncertain.

"Who is Preetham Gowda?," Kumaraswamy questioned, referring to BJP state general secretary Preetham Gowda's involvement in planning the padayatra. "I am hurt as they (BJP leaders) involved Preetham, who wanted to destroy Deve Gowda's family, in planning the padayatra. He is the one who had distributed pendrives in Hassan. Now, BJP leaders want me to join hands and share dais with him," he told reporters. Preetham is a former BJP MLA from Hassan.

On Tuesday, the JDS core committee headed by senior MLA GT Devegowda suggested that BJP postpone the padayatra in view of heavy rain and landslides in the state. People from the Old Mysore region are busy with agricultural activities and BJP had finalised the padayatra without consulting local JDS leaders, he said.

Kumaraswamy said, "We decided to step back as this is not the right time to take out the padayatra. Who will benefit from it when people are facing several issues." P7

Hamas' political chief Haniyeh assassinated

AGENCIES

IN the most significant blow to Hamas since the start of the ongoing war in Gaza, its political chief Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in Tehran on Wednesday.

Iran said Israel was behind the predawn airstrike that killed him. Israel is yet to comment. Just a day earlier, Haniyeh had attended Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's inauguration in Tehran. The assassination follows an Israeli attack on Beirut targeting a Hezbollah commander, who is said to have ordered a rocket attack that killed 12 children in Golan Heights. The attacks on two regional capitals have heightened fears of a wider conflict. "We consider it our duty to seek revenge for his blood," Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said.

There are also concerns that the attack may derail Gaza ceasefire talks. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a meeting of his security cabinet on Wednesday to discuss potential blowbacks, *The Times of Israel* reported.

As political head, Haniyeh played a key role in shaping Hamas' foreign policy, but was less involved in its military affairs, Michael Milshtein, a Hamas expert, told AFP. FULL COVERAGE: P12

Ismail Haniyeh

TWIN STRIKES

- **27 July:** A rocket strike in Israel-annexed Golan kills 12 children
- **30 July:** Israeli strike on Beirut targets Hezbollah leader blamed for Golan attack
- **31 July:** Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh killed in Israeli attack on Tehran, says Iran

Infy gets ₹32K cr GST notice shock

UMA KANNAN @ Bengaluru

INFOSYS, the second largest IT services company in the country, has been slapped with ₹32,403 crore GST evasion notice by the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI). The pre-show cause notice is for non-payment of GST from July 2017 to March 2022 towards expenses incurred by its overseas branch offices.

The company in a BSE filing said Karnataka State GST authorities first issued a notice. Subsequently, Infy received a notice from DGGI. According to the notice viewed by this paper, "Infosys Ltd, Bengaluru is liable to pay IGST (Integrated Goods and Services Tax) under reverse charge mechanism on supplies received from branches located outside India to the tune of ₹32,403.46 crores for the period 2017-18 (July 2017 onwards) to 2021-22."

In its filing, Infosys said, "The Company believes that as per regulations, GST is not applicable on these expenses. Additionally, as per a recent Circular issued by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs on the recommendations of the GST Council, services provided by the overseas branches to Indian entity are not subject to GST." P7